

POLK COUNTY RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

‘The Livewire’

“Committed to enhancing the lives of our customers by providing safe, reliable and economical energy through excellence in customer service and innovation”



November 2023



**American
Red Cross**

GIVE SOMETHING THAT
Means Something®

GIVE BLOOD

Blood Drive **Stromsburg Community**

Viking Center

Sponsored by: Polk County Rural Public Power District

Thursday, November 9, 2023

11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Call (402) 764-4381 to make an appointment



Scan to be directed to
RapidPass®

Come give Oct. 21 thru Nov. 9 and get a \$10 gift card by email. **PLUS**, get a chance to win a \$5,000 prize to treat yourself! You could be one of three lucky winners (one a week). Terms apply: rcblood.org/lunch



Scan to schedule
an appointment.

Watt Matters

By Barb Fowler - General Manager

You recently may have seen our tree contractors or crew trimming trees in your neck of the woods. Right-of-way maintenance (ensuring tree growth does not enter the minimum required clearance space around power lines) is very important to Polk County RPPD. Tree overgrowth near power lines has been responsible for anything from minor flickering power (slightly annoying) on windy days to large-scale outages (very annoying) during heavy storms.

As part of our commitment to provide safe, reliable, and affordable power to our customer-owners, we make significant investments each year in maintaining and trimming electric powerline right-of-way. In 2023, PCRPPD will have performed tree trimming across 200+ miles of rural electric line and within two of the villages we serve.

But there are things customers can do to help ensure the safety and

reliability of our electric infrastructure. If you plan to plant trees this fall, take time to research the mature height of the tree and choose a location where your fully-grown tree won't interfere with electric powerlines. Consulting a local tree nursery about preferred tree locations can have the added benefit of providing home-cooling benefits in the summer and a wind-break from harsh winter winds that can ultimately help lower your electric bill as well. As always, you should also call 811 to locate underground utilities. Not only will you save yourself from a nasty electric shock by not digging in the wrong spot, but you can also save yourself from future expensive headaches, like root systems growing into your water and sewer lines.

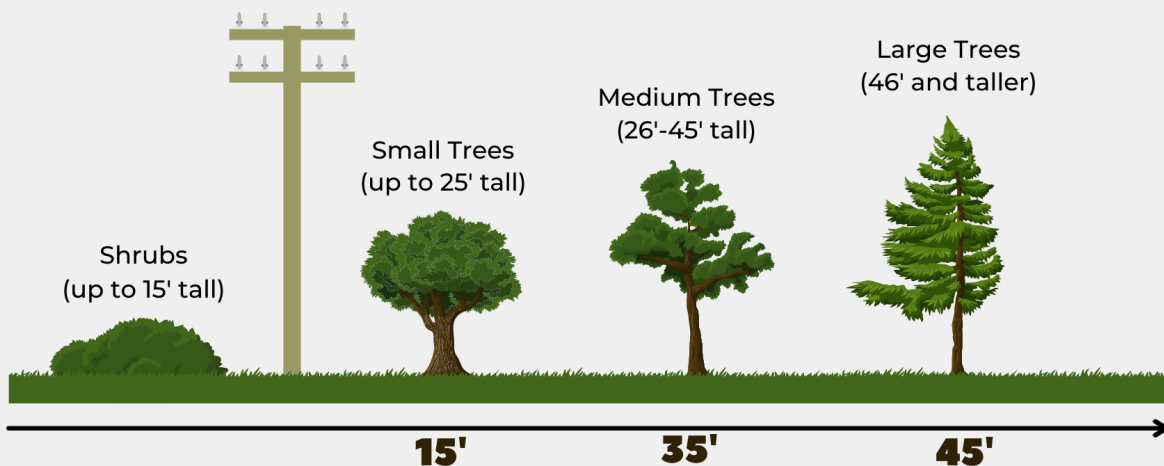
If you currently have trees on your property that are growing near power lines, please contact us. Never try to prune them yourself. For trees that are



in our powerline right-of-way, we will send linemen to trim and spray. For overgrowth between your meter and your home, we can provide a list of tree contractors in our area. While the temptation to save money and do it yourself can be strong, we want to remind you that coming into direct contact with electricity is a matter of life or death and needs to be left to the professionals.

Plant the **RIGHT TREE** in the **RIGHT PLACE**

The larger the tree, the farther it should be from a power line. Avoid planting beneath power lines, near poles or close to electrical equipment.



EnergyWise Tip: Preparing for the Cold

By Cory Fuehrer, NPPD Energy Efficiency Program Manager

From October through March, the average Nebraska home consumes more than one-third of its annual energy requirements to keep warm and cozy. It is no wonder heating is the largest energy expenditure most people have. Here are a few ways to keep a few more energy dollars in your pocket this year:



Evaluate your insulation. Since it is seldom seen, most people do not consider whether their home is adequately insulated. Inside exterior walls and above ceilings, insulation is critical to maintaining a comfortable indoor temperature and lowering energy usage.

Throughout Nebraska, attics should be insulated to a minimum R-49. Exterior walls providing an R-value less than 13 definitely have need for additional cavity or exterior sheath insulation.



Seal air leaks. While old windows are often characterized as energy losers, it is usually the air leaks around and through them that causes the greatest energy losses. Worn out frames and cracked seals can allow warm air to escape during the winter. Cracked caulking and improper sealing during

installation are additional reasons to investigate.



Tune-up your heating system. Have a certified HVAC specialist perform a tune up to ensure all of the heating system's parts are in good working order. This includes inspecting your heating system, cleaning and adjusting each component as necessary, replacing the filter, and testing its overall efficiency. Regular maintenance for your HVAC system will prevent breakdowns, increase efficiency, extend the system's lifespan.



Use space heaters wisely. Space heaters can consume a lot of energy, especially if used continuously. Be mindful of when and where you use them. They can be more effective at reducing heating costs if they are used in one specific room or area instead of the entire house. However, if that room or area is not well insulated and has air leaks, the space heater will run nonstop, resulting in higher energy costs.



Manage the fireplace. If a fire isn't burning in the fireplace, keep the fireplace damper closed. When the damper is open and there isn't a fire burning, warm air can escape through the chimney. Purchasing energy-efficient fireplace grates is also a good investment. These grates will help circulate cool air into the fireplace while pushing warm air back into the room.



Install a smart thermostat. Set it up to adjust temperatures to 70°F or lower when you're home and to automatically lower the set point to 65°F or lower during bedtime hours or while no one is home.

Along with PCRPPD, Nebraska Public Power District wants to help you efficiently keep your home warm this winter. They may also provide EnergyWise incentives for reducing the cost of some efficiency-improvement projects. For more ideas to make your home or business EnergyWise, contact them, or visit www.pcrppd.energywisenebraska.com for more information.

ENERGYWISESM
Use less. Spend less. Do more.

NEVER EMAIL PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please bring any sensitive information to our office and do not email it to us. We want to help you keep your personal information secure.



POLK COUNTY RURAL PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT

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